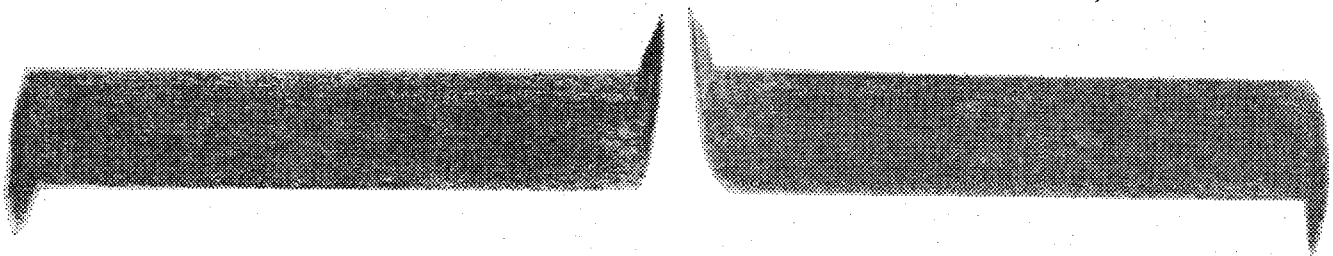


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THE NATION

MARCH 7, 1959 . . 25c



A VOICE FOR THE CITIES

by Senator Joseph S. Clark

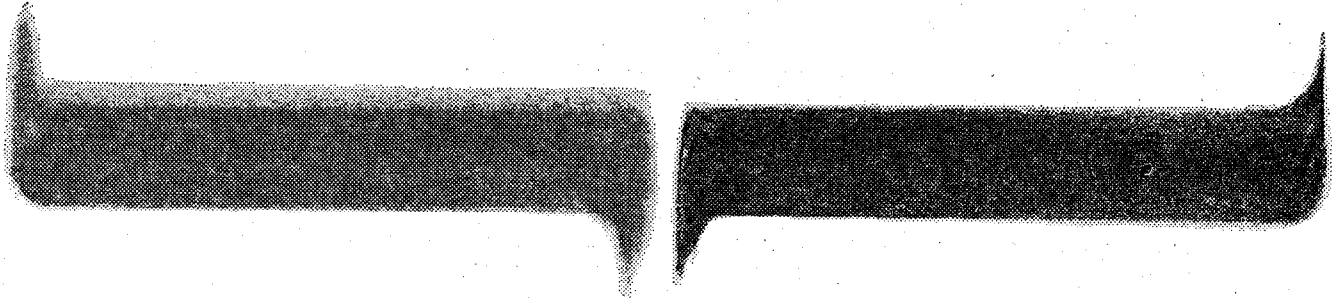


THE DILEMMA OF INFLATION

by Paul M. Sweezy

LET EDUCATORS RUN OUR SCHOOLS

by Myron Lieberman



LETTERS

Driving in Sweden

Dear Sirs: I was surprised that David Cort, in his excellent article on reckless driving (*Nation*, January 24) made no mention of the possible preventive role to be played by driving schools and harder-to-pass driving tests.

I now live in Sweden and, having driven a car in the United States, am trying to obtain a Swedish license. Here all prospective drivers are required to attend a state-authorized driving school. Fifteen to thirty hours' practice under a skilled instructor are usual; lectures must be attended on traffic regulations, road signs, special techniques; and the contents of a 300-page driver's handbook must be well absorbed. In addition, medical and police authorities must testify to the applicant's physical fitness and "good citizenship."

But perhaps Detroit fears a loss of sales if American requirements for obtaining driver's licenses were to be substantially increased.

JANE L. RAAB

Enkoeping, Sweden

Notes on RAND

Dear Sirs: In my article on The RAND Corporation (*The Nation*, Feb. 14), there is a reference to "Brownlee W. Haydon, whose official title as Director of Telecommunications conceals his real job as RAND's semi-official public relations man."

This is something of a switch from the original, and it is rather seriously unfair to Mr. Haydon. His title is Director of Technical Communications, and he is in charge of all publications, classified and otherwise, which come out of RAND. His public-relations duties, while real, are in addition to his other duties and actually form only a small part of his job.

It has also been called to my attention (not by anyone at RAND) that, immediately after a reference to the fact that "the men at RAND are in some cases troubled men," the article relates parts of an interview with Dr. J. M. Goldsen. Any implication that Dr. Goldsen is one of the "troubled men" was unintentional; the state of his psyche is unknown to me.

GENE MARINE

Los Angeles

Dear Sirs: Readers of Gene Marine's article on the RAND Corporation can get a taste of the fruits of the high-

priced thinking on World War III going on in that organization by reading a piece in the January, 1959, issue of *Foreign Affairs*. The reference is to "The Delicate Balance of Terror," by Albert Wohlstetter of RAND.

The "grim argument" presented is that the "balance of terror theory of automatic deterrence" is a "contribution to the rhetoric rather than the logic of war in the thermonuclear age." Deterrence will be harder to achieve in the 1960s than we think. This, in part, is due to our uncertainty as to what we and "the aggressor" can and will do in the field of development, selection and disposition of unimaginably costly and destructive weapons systems, an uncertainty not shared by "the aggressor" who can "weigh continually our performance" and would have "the enormous advantage of the first strike." We are reminded that "Russian casualties in World War II were more than 20,000,000. Yet Russia recovered extremely well. . . ." Somehow, in the "logic of war in the thermonuclear age," the Russian pasture always seems greener than ours!

Is deterrence, then, bankrupt? Not quite! "Without a deterrent . . . general war is likely. With it, however, war might still occur." What, then, should we do? Obviously, redouble our efforts and already astronomic expenditures. But above all, let us not relax, for: "To be tense where there is danger is only rational."

I admit that my account does not come near doing justice to the author's scholarship and powers of analysis. Perhaps, if a source other than the Air Force were available to keep him in the \$15,000- to \$25,000-a-year bracket, his outlook would become less gloomy, and he might make a worth-while contribution to smog control or, better yet, the control of paranoia.

MARTIN PARRETT

New York City

'Rewarding Literature'

Dear Sirs: In reply to Albert Maltz in your Letters column of Feb. 14, may I cast my vote for *Dr. Zhivago* as a "great novel" and "rewarding literature." Mr. Maltz's criticism of it as "mediocre to bad," citing inept coincidences and Zhivago's crucial abandonment of Lara as an act that "defied understanding," was surprising. . . .

Zhivago is incomprehensible only if we expect him to act as a middle-class professor of literature in a university town. His abandonment of Lara is inevitable, since he possesses spirit above

the herd. His act is also, of course, sacrificial. The characters must be considered as symbols — more than life-sized. The coincidences, absurd in the ordinary novel of manners, are lightning flashes in *Dr. Zhivago*. Shakespeare was not above such devices. There is tenacious spiritual strength here, as if destiny waited upon man.

The shams of society — Communist, bourgeois and Czarist — Zhivago opposes irreconcilably for his soul's sake. It would profit us greatly in the United States if we read *Dr. Zhivago* as Pasternak meant it. We have some shams of our own.

DAVID DIORIO

New York City

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EDITORIALS

The Impasse in Germany

No one on this side of the Atlantic can say positively what Khrushchev is up to. But at least one important clue has come out of the Macmillan-Khrushchev talks, as reported by Drew Middleton in *The New York Times* of February 26. "The British leaders have been struck," Middleton writes, "by the Russians' fear of Germany and of the danger to the Soviet Union if West Germany is armed with nuclear weapons." According to West German sources, this fear is genuine and constitutes the chief determinant of Soviet policy. Moreover, Khrushchev appears to be in an exceptionally favorable tactical position to make a stand. There has been much talk of an impending ICBM missile gap in 1961. But there is a missile gap right now which is much more pertinent to the German situation. The Russians are said to have thousands of operational short-range and mid-range missiles emplaced or in mobile condition in the Soviet Union, East Germany and Hungary. These include missiles in the 150-800-mile range, while we have nothing between the Redstone (200 miles) and the Air Force's Thor and the Army's Jupiter (1,200 miles minimum). Khrushchev doesn't want a war, but with this equipment at his disposal he may think he can stop German nuclear armament without a war.

This theory may not be true, but it seems to fit the facts. If it is true, or anything like true, such measures as the Congressional resolution proposed by Senator Javits are worse than useless. Nor does the President's expression of determination to hold Berlin, which the resolution would reinforce, advance the Allied cause except as conventional diplomacy requires a counter-threat to every threat. What is needed first of all is a fully-functioning Secretary of State. Time is running out and President Eisenhower will have to get over his fixation on Secretary Dulles, however painful the parting may be. The job will be hard enough for a Secretary in perfect health; for Dulles, it will be impossible. Second, we should call for United Nations intervention before the situation becomes still more difficult. Why wait for the Russians to turn over the corridor to the

East Germans — a move which we have no earthly chance of stopping — and then probe with trucks or an armored column, and *then* resort to the Security Council? Of course, if we could persuade the Russians to maintain the status quo! But they will not oblige us — nor, apparently, will they oblige Macmillan. If, then, the British Prime Minister's mission turns out to be a failure, the time to go to the Security Council is now. And if it is Germany's nuclear armament which is really behind Khrushchev's intransigence, we can be equally tough about Berlin and still center the discussion in the only area in which a settlement of the German problem can possibly be reached.

"Kill the Umpire!"

At its recent meeting in Chicago, the American Bar Association reaffirmed the duty of lawyers and the bar to defend the Supreme Court, but chose to do so in the odd context of a report by its Committee on Communist Tactics, Strategy and Objectives. As the *Washington Post* observed, there is about this committee, both in name and composition, "a certain partisan posture":

Item. The committee chairman, Peter Campbell Brown, once served on the Subversive Activities Control Board; later, as New York City Commissioner of Investigations, he directed various "Communist investigations"; still later, as New York City Corporation Counsel, he represented the Board of Higher Education in the Harry Slochower case (which Mr. Slochower won on a reversal by the Supreme Court).

Item. Committee member Louis C. Wyman, while serving as Attorney General of New Hampshire, was designated by the state legislature as a one-man Subversive Activities Investigating Committee; as investigator, he initiated the case against Paul Sweezy which, as Attorney General, he lost before the Supreme Court.

Item. Committee member Julius Applebaum of Miami filed a brief on behalf of the American Bar Association in the proceedings to disbar Leo Sheiner for the offense of having invoked the Fifth Amendment when questioned about his political associations; Mr. Sheiner, disbarred, won a reversal on appeal to the Florida Supreme

Court (see editorial, *The Nation*, April 27, 1957, p. 354).

Item. Committee member Ray Murphy of California, a former State Commander of the American Legion, is another specialist on "subversive activities."

Item. Committee member Louis B. Nichols joined the FBI as a special agent in 1934, after attending Kalamazoo College; for many years he directed the bureau's public-relations section. The official historian of the bureau writes of Mr. Nichols — whose son is named J. Edgar Nichols — that he handled "a tremendous number of chores for the Director."

Thus the "certain partisan posture" of five members of the ten-man committee. The posture is also evident in the original draft of the report, which characterized First Amendment freedoms as "technicalities" and charged that the Supreme Court had handled some twenty-three cases involving these freedoms in "such a manner as to encourage an increase in Communist activities in the United States."

In effect, the American Bar Association appointed its own "un-American activities committee" and then felt reluctant to repudiate the result. The A.B.A.'s humiliation would be complete were it not for the fact that, in the course of a lively debate, the phrasing of the original report was somewhat modified. Nevertheless, it stands, in all essentials, about on a par with the report of the Conference of State Chief Justices about which we had sharp comment to make last fall ("Judicial Steamroller," *The Nation*, September 6, 1958, p. 102). When it echoes from ball parks across the country, the ancient cry "Kill the Umpire!" is strictly in the American grain, but when the same hoarse cry echoes from the House of Delegates of the American Bar Association, and is hurled at the Supreme Court, it is incongruous, discordant and unworthy of the legal profession.

To The Barricades!

When David Lawrence calls a Senator a hero, it is news, even when the Senator is William Proxmire, a Democrat, attacking Lyndon B. Johnson, another Democrat. Allowing for the Lawrencian propensity for rhetoric, the characterization was not far wrong. And yet all Proxmire was objecting to was Johnson's one-man control over what legislation shall reach the Senate floor. It is a measure of the degree of conformity pervading the Senate, in common with lesser institutions, that he received scarcely any support from his colleagues.

In a somewhat analogous rebellion, Walter Reuther has locked horns with George Meany who, if his power in the AFL-CIO is less than Lyndon Johnson's in the Senate, is a leader of the same stripe. Aside from his personal inclinations, Mr. Reuther had little choice. He hails from Detroit, where there are 194,000 Detroiters without jobs — some 3,000 more than a year ago and

more than 12 per cent of the city's work force — despite the fact that production of passenger cars is running about 12 per cent ahead of last year. The unemployed were breathing down Mr. Reuther's neck, and he had to do something. So he proposed a "march" on Washington. But Mr. Meany, disturbed by the implication of militancy, countered with the suggestion of a "conference"; at last report a semantic compromise had been reached and the meeting was being billed as a "mass conference." Whatever its name, its efficacy is doubtful, but at least Mr. Reuther has succeeded in jarring the Buddha-like inertia of Mr. Meany.

To tone down Thomas Jefferson: a little rebellion now and then waters the tree of liberty. If any other brave souls are inclined to join Messrs. Proxmire and Reuther, the line forms on the left.

A Canadian Lesson

An event which draws streamer headlines in the Canadian press may attract less attention in ours than the arrest of a pickpocket. In "Canada Shelves the Arrow" (*The Nation*, February 7, 1959), Harold Greer discussed Prime Minister John Diefenbaker's decision to replace the CF-105, a supersonic interceptor finally ready for production after five years and almost \$400 million had been spent on it, with U. S. Bomarc missiles. One reason was the obsolescence of fighter aircraft in the ICBM age (but, as far as ICBMs are concerned, the Bomarc is equally obsolete). Another was that a Bomarc costs \$250,000, an Arrow about \$4.5 million.

Most Canadians uphold the decision, but the very papers which support the Prime Minister on technological grounds castigate him mercilessly on economic and political grounds. The economic grounds center on the dismissal of nearly 14,000 employees of A. V. Roe Canada Ltd. (Avro), the contractor for the Arrow. The politics of it is scarcely less painful. In an article headlined in red across the entire page, "Diefenbaker Surrenders Our Sovereignty?" the *Toronto Daily Star* complains that Canadians must get American clearance to visit their own Arctic, pre-empted by the U.S. DEW line, and that RCAF pilots on exchange duty at American bases must leave the briefing rooms when nuclear weapons are discussed. Editorially, the paper complains that "... We, in effect, abdicate our freedom of military decision in favor of the Pentagon."

Even the alliance with our closest neighbor and friend is an uneasy one — how uneasy the American newspaper reader would never guess. But though the political lesson will not be heeded, perhaps the chambers of commerce of Seattle and Los Angeles will ponder the economic one. The border is no respecter of obsolescence, and the employment hazards of an armament economy are the same everywhere. But in the United States, their import will be infinitely greater.

A VOICE FOR THE CITIES . . by Senator Joseph S. Clark

THIS IS A land of milk and honey and money.

We have become accustomed to a gross national product and a rate of private expenditures which are, in the old Hollywood phrase, "merely colossal." But our schools are deteriorating, traffic is strangling our cities, slums are spreading quicker than we can eradicate them, and in the midst of affluence there is poverty. Seven million American families are existing on incomes of \$2,000 a year or less.

Our failure to face and deal realistically with these problems amounts to a kind of paralysis in our public life. The scope of our action is determined not by a forthright analysis of the facts which all admit, but by preconceived limitations growing out of inertia and outmoded thinking.

Last November's election was, I am convinced, an indication of profound public discontent with the way things are going. Americans voted for candidates of both parties who appear to look to the future and not to the past. If we interpret the voter's mood accurately, complacency with present-day America cannot be the mark of the current Congress.

MY OWN discontent, when I look at our public scene, rises for many reasons, but the one about which I perhaps feel most keenly is our failure to recognize and deal with the change which has transformed us from a rural to an urban nation.

Simply because of the economics of housing, the continuance of our present cities is assured for the immediate future. For some time the rate of new housing construction has been insufficient even to take care of our expanding population and to replace dwellings which burn or are demolished. The prospect for the future shows little chance of improvement. People will continue to live in cities for the simple reason that there is nowhere else for them

to go. There is grave question, of course, as to what kind of cities they will be, but in any case they will continue to house at least as many people as they now do.

Even with the most optimistic assumptions as to urban renewal, we can expect to house in our central cities only 17 million of the estimated total population increase of 55 million in the next twenty years. Thus, at least two-thirds of our population growth must be housed outside the core cities of our metropolitan areas. In other words, the metropolitan explosion cannot be stopped.

So we are going to have central cities and rapidly growing fringe areas which surround and swallow many smaller cities. Within another generation, the remaining gaps will be filled in the continuous urban and suburban belt reaching from Portland, Maine, to Alexandria, Virginia. The problem is to make these urban concentrations as civilized an environment as possible.

WHAT IS wrong now is familiar to all of us: the decay of the older areas of central cities; blight and slums; the flight of the middle class to the suburbs; the vicious circle created as talented people desert the central city, leaving a leadership vacuum filled by those less skilled culturally, economically and politically. And, on the other hand, the often barren life in the suburbs—inadequate community organization, the haphazard provision of services through inadequate special districts, and the oppressive problems of transportation and communication (traffic bottlenecks, lack of downtown parking) resulting in strangulation of the commercial areas of the central cities.

Yet a visitor from outer space, looking at the structure of our federal government, would conclude that America is still a rural nation, with rural problems its dominant concern. We have a Department of Agriculture, which devotes itself to the problems of the farm; we have a Department of the Interior, which reflects the interests and needs of the

more sparsely settled states; but there is no department with responsibility for the problems of the tens of millions of people living in forced congestion in metropolitan areas.

City people, too, need an advocate in Washington. To illustrate: the Senate became disturbed last year about the plight of the nation's railroads. The Department of Commerce was concerned; so was the Interstate Commerce Commission. The Commerce Committee of the Senate has a standing subcommittee with jurisdiction over railroads. So it organized a study. Those of us who have been worried about a related problem—namely, the plight of the commuter and the deterioration of mass transit in the cities—tried to make sure that urban mass-transit problems would be covered in this study. The answer was no. States rights intervened.

No department of the federal government has any interest in what should be done about commuter-transportation services. No committee or subcommittee of the Congress has any jurisdiction. Yet mass transit is not merely a state and local problem. Much of the traffic crosses state lines. Some of the railroads involved serve many states. Let's face it: state and local governments are incapable of dealing successfully with this problem in most localities—just as urban renewal was generally beyond their competence until the federal government stepped in.

Maybe the ultimate answer is that mass transit should not be a federal problem, even in part. Maybe the same applies to air and stream pollution, and water supply. But what concerns me most is that, at the present time, we don't even have the mechanism for examining such problems comprehensively and making intelligent national decisions.

I believe the first step should be the creation of a Department of Urban Affairs at Cabinet level with the responsibility of keeping abreast of urban and metropolitan problems and developing recommendations for federal, state and local action. The department would represent the ur-

JOSEPH S. CLARK, Dem., is senior Senator from Pennsylvania. A former mayor of Philadelphia, he has maintained his interest in urban problems.

March 7, 1959

ban viewpoint in the administration of nation-wide programs which particularly affect cities and their suburbs — notably, highways and water conservation. It would be assigned—initially, at least—only those operating programs which are peculiarly urban, and these are already clustered in the Housing and Home Finance Agency. But the department, to my mind, would be something far beyond the present HHFA. The additional element would be a “hunting license” to study, research and recommend, and a responsibility to listen to representatives of groups like the HHFA, understand their problems, and reflect that understanding in the policy-forming processes within the Executive branch.

I have seen the criticism that a new department should not be formed until a philosophy of federal-state-local relations is agreed upon. I think the logic points in just the opposite direction. Governmental philosophies do not spring full-blown into being; they evolve. But they cannot evolve unless someone in government has responsibility for thinking creatively about them. We will get the philosophy far more quickly if we establish the mechanism first.

IN 1957, speaking at a convention of the American Institute of Architects, I responded to the question, “How can the city be restored?” by suggesting that three things are needed: more money, changes in political structure and elimination of political lag.

First, money. Our central cities are in mortal danger not only through strangulation from traffic congestion but through financial starvation and attrition. The city, still the hub and nerve center of its area, must provide more and more services at increasing costs not only for the people who live in it, but also for those who work in it, use its facilities, but no longer vote, live and pay taxes there. Moreover, the people who can best afford to sustain the increasing costs of maintaining and improving the city’s facilities are the very ones who have moved to the suburbs.

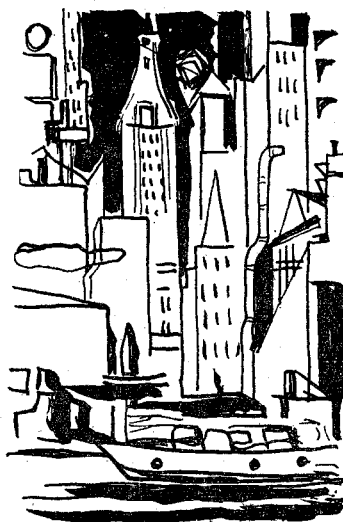
Some recently published figures on the Washington area illustrate this point. They reveal that the average

family income for families living within the District of Columbia in 1956 was \$4,900; but in the immediately surrounding area it was \$6,773, more than one-third higher. In nearby Montgomery County, Maryland, it ranged up to \$7,735. I suspect the same relative income levels hold true for similar areas.

As the city’s costs go up, its tax resources go down. Those who move in are poorer than those who move out. Moreover, in the competition with state and federal governments for tax revenues, local government comes off a poor third. Business, looking for lower tax rates, is following the flight to the suburbs. The city is left with the problems of providing the needs and services required for civilized living without the money to cope with them.

I don’t believe the way out of this financial dilemma will come through local taxing systems—even as they may be revised. Wealth is too unequally distributed; its location bears too little relation to the need for services. Hence the property tax is unfair and relatively unproductive as well as relatively inflexible. And there is hardly any other kind of tax available which can be administered well on a local basis. Local sales taxes drive business outside the taxing jurisdiction. Graduated income taxes have been largely pre-empted by state and federal governments.

There are only two alternatives. One is to establish a new level of government, a fourth layer, that will correspond geographically to the new community: the metropolitan area.



The other is to use the larger jurisdictions that already exist: the state and federal governments, which in practical fact means the latter, since states are as limited in their financial resources as the cities.

All the evidence I have seen indicates that, despite the current outcry, the federal budget is less of a strain on the national tax base than local budgets are on local tax resources. Since 1946, state and local taxes per capita have risen three times as fast as federal taxes; state and local debts (a rough measure of the excess of need over resources) have also risen much faster than the federal debt. This is why it seems to me that the economy campaign now being waged by some powerful organizations is totally misguided when directed against those parts of the federal budget which would relieve the burden on local taxpayers—for example, federal aid to education. Equally misguided have been the Administration’s cuts in urban renewal, which is a splendid example of something that could not be done at all if the communities had to rely on their own tax resources.

THE SECOND obstacle to restoration of the city is obsolete governmental structure. The legal and political framework in which we struggle to provide for the city of the future is sometimes our own worst enemy, when it should be our greatest ally.

What would we do if we were the Founding Fathers, and were creating a national political structure in this year 1959 instead of 1787? Of course, we would still create a federal system, but would we have forty-nine states—plus Hawaii—with the present boundaries? Of course not. We would pay attention to the natural boundaries of social, economic and political communities and regions—we might even try to make boundary adjustments from time to time as conditions change.

But we are the captives of the mistakes, as well as the beneficiaries of the wisdom, of the Founding Fathers and their successors. We can’t do much about illogical state boundaries in our lifetime. We can only try to moderate their effects.

In the meantime, there is a great

opportunity for political invention at the local level. Instead of the unimaginative labyrinth of special and *ad hoc* bodies created in our metropolitan areas, let's continue to search for new approaches to metropolitan government. The need is great. I favor such developments as those being worked out in Toronto and Atlanta, in Dade County, Florida, and Allegheny County in Pennsylvania. And, in seeking larger jurisdictions, let's use intelligently the larger jurisdictions that already exist—the county, for instance; or for problems which cross county lines, the state; or for metropolitan problems that are characteristically interstate, the federal government.

IF THIS last sounds like a dangerous invasion of our honored tradition of local home rule, consider what's happened in highways. Very few of our communities had made any real start in building the metropolitan highway system of the future until the new federal highway program was enacted. Now superhighways within metropolitan areas are an accepted part of the interstate system. Communities have the wherewithal to get these highways built, yet local control over the location of the highways is not truly lessened. City authorities participate to the full in these decisions. Under federal leadership we have improvised a *de*

facto metropolitan structure for highway-building which is working.

The same evolution is evident in regard to metropolitan water supplies. Municipal water supply has already become an important factor in federal river-development projects; eventually, it may be the major factor. And because of the multipurpose use of water today, it may require a river-basin governmental agency to coordinate various consumer uses.

But to use our higher levels of government as we should in the solution of urban problems, two other political reforms are required:

1. We must bring the state legislature up to date, so that the tail of the rural counties stops wagging the dog of our huge urban populations.

2. We must re-orient a federal government superbly equipped to deal with the nineteenth-century problems of agriculture and natural resources, and hardly equipped at all to deal with the urban society which today it largely represents.

A federal government which does not pay as much attention to urban culture as to agriculture, to the conservation of cities as to soil, to the movement of people and goods within as well as between cities, is not adapted to today's America.

The third obstacle to restoring the city I have called political lag.

Thomas Jefferson warned that "the laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind. . . ." We must overcome the lag that separates the politician from the planner. The successful politician leads the people as well as reflects their views. Overcoming political lag means educating not just the politicians, but the public as well.

I don't suggest that creation of a Federal Department of Urban Affairs will determine whether the good society will survive. But I think it can be the focus for efforts to restore our cities—perhaps our greatest challenge in the age-old battle of man to control and shape the environment in which he lives. The struggle between man and his surroundings—both those he found and those he made himself—is the stuff of which history is made. Along the path of this struggle, civilizations have come and gone.

And in many ways, the city is civilization. It is more than form; it is substance, life, spirit. Streets, buildings and facilities exist for a purpose; they came into being because people need them to lead the type of existence which they preferred to any other.

And the desire to live in cities, the desire for urban culture—these will continue as long as civilization lasts.

THE DILEMMA of INFLATION . . by Paul M. Sweezy

PUBLIC DISCUSSION of economic problems and policies in the United States is increasingly dominated by the issue of inflation. And since every capitalist country has its inflation problem—sometimes actual and sometimes latent—the discussion can hardly fail to be of interest to people in other countries.

To begin with, it may be worth while to remind readers of the underlying factual situation which has made inflation seem an increasingly urgent problem in recent years. The following table shows the course of consumer prices in the United States

since World War II came to an end.

Consumer Price Index
(1947-49 = 100)

1945	76.9	1952	113.5
1946	83.4	1953	114.4
1947	95.5	1954	114.8
1948	102.8	1955	114.5
1949	101.8	1956	116.2
1950	102.8	1957	120.2
1951	111.0	1958 (Nov.)	123.9

Thus in a period of thirteen years the dollar has lost approximately 40 per cent of its purchasing power. Or to put the point in another way,

savings accumulated during the war and held in 1945 have lost an average of 4.7 per cent of their value every year in the intervening period.

Some economists have attempted to make light of this record, arguing that inflation is an old story here and that if we have lived with it in

PAUL M. SWEETZ, co-editor of the *Monthly Review*, has taught economics at Harvard and Cornell universities. He is the author of *The Theory of Capitalist Development* and other books.

the past we can surely do so in the future. For example, Professor Alvin H. Hansen of Harvard states in a letter to the editor of *The New York Times* (January 23):

During the decade just past, the compound rate of increase of wholesale prices was $1\frac{1}{4}$ per cent per annum; of consumer prices, $1\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. In contrast, in the sixteen years of peacetime prosperity from 1897 to 1913, the compound rate of increase per annum was much higher — $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Taking the longer view covering the six decades from 1897 to 1958, the per annum rate of increase of prices (wholesale and consumer) was $2\frac{1}{3}$ per cent. . . .

Yet when anyone suggests a possible increase in prices of around 2 or $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent per annum over the next two or three decades, alarmists are apt to cry "ruin and disaster." This rate of increase is, however, precisely what the United States in fact experienced during the last sixty years.

It seems to me that this argument is quite superficial and misleading. Indeed, if we accept it, it is difficult to see why there should be so much concern over inflation at the present time.

Professor Hansen has overlooked two crucially important points. The first is that very few people now alive are strongly influenced in their thinking by what happened before World War I, so that the experience of the years 1897 to 1913 is largely irrelevant. What people do remember is the period of peace between the two wars, and this was a period of *declining* prices (the consumer index reached 85.7 in 1920, declined abruptly to 76.4 the following year,

and then drifted predominantly downward until 1940, when it stood at 59.9; the contrast with what has happened since World War II could hardly be sharper). Second, with the growth of savings accounts, life insurance, social security and private pension systems, the injustices of inflation affect many more people (both absolutely and relatively) than used to be the case. In other words, more people than ever before have a vested interest in the stability of the purchasing power of money.

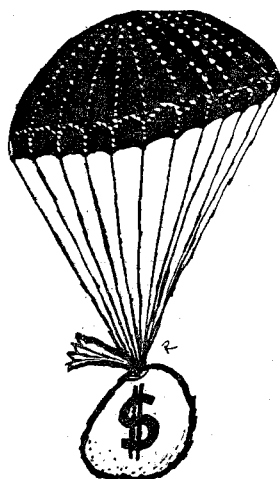
IT USED TO BE thought that there was only one cause of inflation, namely, an excess of demand for goods and services over the capacity of the economy to supply them. (Whether the expansion of demand also implies, or results from, an expansion of the money supply is not a crucial question in the theory of inflation, though it is often made to seem so. Actually, a given amount of money can support very different levels of demand, depending on how rapidly it circulates.) But obviously the view that inflation can occur only under conditions of full utilization of capacity is no longer tenable. The trend of unemployment, both absolutely and as a percentage of the labor force, has been slowly rising ever since 1945; and while the precise measurement of excess capacity is impossible, no knowledgeable observer of the American scene doubts that it has been steadily increasing in recent years and has now reached formidable proportions. In other words, though the old explanation of inflation might have had a certain plausibility in the first few postwar years, it has increasingly lost its relevance.

New theories of inflation have therefore become necessary, and several have been put forward. The simplest, and the most popular in conservative circles, blames inflation exclusively on the strength of the trade unions. According to this theory, unions are in a position to enforce wage increases in excess of productivity increases. As a result, costs per unit are pushed up and prices must rise to compensate.

A more sophisticated form of this

theory holds that any wage increase is inflationary even if it does not exceed the rise in productivity in the particular industry in which it occurs, provided only that it is in excess of the *average* rise in productivity for the economy as a whole. As Professor Gottfried Haberler puts it, for inflation to take place, it is only necessary that there be "strong pressure exerted by powerful trade unions in excess of the gradual rise in *general* productivity of labor. For the operation of the mechanism it is sufficient that in progressive industries, where productivity rises faster than in the economy as a whole, wages rise no faster than productivity in these particular industries. This is enough to keep inflation going because the American economy is sufficiently competitive to transmit such wage rises after a short while to the less progressive parts of the economy (such as the service industries) which cannot absorb the rise in labor cost without a rise in their selling prices."

OTHER theorists, generally of a more liberal persuasion, have argued that the fault lies not only (or not at all) with the unions but also (or exclusively) with the big corporations that dominate the American economy and invariably exercise a greater or lesser degree of monopoly power in the markets in which they operate. The reasoning here is that monopolistic corporations, seeking maximum profits, either raise their prices, or fail to lower them, in spite of rising productivity due to technological progress. In either case the result is a widening profit margin, which naturally offers an attractive target to the unions. The latter press for higher wages, and the corporations are usually quite willing to grant them provided the increase is not so great as to wipe out the entire benefit of improved techniques. (The corporations may, and often do, use the wage increase as an excuse for a further price hike, though this is not essential to the theory.) This arrangement brings benefits to both the big unions and the monopolistic corporations in the more progressive sectors of the economy, and it transmits inflationary impulses to



the remainder of the economy in the manner described by Haberler.

It is unnecessary, I think, to dwell long on President Eisenhower's favorite remedy for inflation, namely, preaching restraint to capital and labor, with the heavy emphasis usually on labor. Capitalism is a system in which the public interest is served, if at all, only by the individual capitalists and workers striving to serve their private interests, and it makes no sense to defend the system and at the same time ask people to behave in ways that are contrary to their own interests. What's more, such preaching never has worked in the past and shows absolutely no signs of working in the present or the future.



"Oh, is it over?"

THERE ARE many conservatives, both in Washington and elsewhere, who still think the problem of inflation control is largely, if not wholly, a matter of restricting demand via higher interest rates, tight money and curtailed government spending. In one sense, of course, we can say that they are quite wrong. With 6 per cent of the labor force unemployed (this is the December, 1958, figure) and idle capacity widely distributed throughout the economy, it is absurd to attribute inflationary pressures to excessive demand. And yet, as Polonius said, "though this be madness, yet there is method in't." For it is clear that even if excess demand is not the root of the trouble, nevertheless a *sufficiently large reduction* of demand will put a stop to the threat of inflation. The *modus operandi* here is simple: the throttling of demand inhibits monopolists from raising prices and weakens unions by creating heavy unemployment. But this is merely another way of saying that inflation can be checked by depression. To be sure, this still leaves open the question of *how much* depression is necessary, but the principle is clear enough and is unlikely to be challenged by anyone.

It may well be that no one in the Eisenhower Administration actually *advocates* this method of inflation control, yet in practice it is unquestionably the method which has been adopted. Judged by any rational standard, the American economy is

still a long way from being out of the depression which began in the summer of 1957. The Department of Commerce has just issued a new statistical series showing Gross National Product (GNP) by quarters in constant dollars of 1957 purchasing power. The latest figure is \$428.3 billion for the third quarter of 1958. Except for the even more depressed first and second quarters of 1958, one has to go back more than three years, to the second quarter of 1955, to find a lower real GNP. Taking account of the fact that population has grown from 165 million to 174 million during this three-year period, and that the productivity of labor has been steadily rising, one can see how true it is to say that the United States today is in a state of relative depression. And yet, far from initiating policies to combat this depression, the Administration is doing its best to restrain the growth of the very demand which is so urgently needed. Even so, it is by no means certain that a resumption of the inflationary process will be avoided. The President's annual Economic Report, delivered to the Congress on January 20, fairly bristles with warnings of more inflation ahead, and in effect holds out the threat of even higher unemployment should further government action to check a rise in prices become necessary. For the Eisenhower Administration, it seems, the two horns of the economic dilemma are inflation and depression,

and ironically enough it may well be impaled on both of them at once.

CRITICS of the Government have sought to derive political advantage from this situation, and liberal defenders of capitalism have seen the dangers implicit in it. Both groups have had to put forward alternative programs for dealing with the threat of inflation.

One such program, widely associated with the name of Leon Keyserling, chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers under Truman, seems to me to be nothing but a trick to avoid coming to grips with the problem while permitting its advocates to pillory the Administration. The reasoning is that if the economy were operating at a higher rate, unit costs of production would decline and prices would therefore fall rather than rise. From this it is concluded that the way to combat inflation is not through tight money and budget-slashing, but rather through expansionary credit and fiscal policies. The weakness of this argument is obvious: while it is true that lower costs might make lower prices *possible*, there is no mechanism at work in the system to bring about this result. Quite the contrary. Rising demand will tempt monopolists to raise prices, and declining unemployment will strengthen unions and encourage them to step up their demands on employers. Unfortunately for the liberal Democrats, they have not yet

had the luck to discover a way to eat their cake and have it too. The dilemma of inflation is a real one, not a figment of the Republican imagination.

A more serious program has been suggested, still very tentatively, by another group of liberals, most prominent among them being Professor J. K. Galbraith of Harvard, wartime Deputy Administrator of the Office of Price Administration and author of the currently best-selling book *The Affluent Society*. Galbraith is quite clear about the reality of the threat of inflation and has no illusions that capitalism can survive a continuous rise of prices without serious damage. He also knows perfectly well that credit and fiscal policies can check inflation only by creating a depression—no less dangerous for the future of capitalism. Thus, the conclusion is that the only solution may be to adopt a system of price-and-wage controls. In the words of David Demarest Lloyd, a former Special Assistant to President Truman:

Aside from the luckless farmer, the mechanisms of the economy are set to raise incomes to meet higher prices and not to bring prices down to meet incomes. In collective bargaining, in the halls of Congress, wherever wages are fixed, the argument is unanswerable that higher prices require higher wages. Against this conviction, the policy of squeezing credit is impotent; it ruins small business without affecting prices. This is the structure of our society, and it might be well to

assent to it and take a fresh look at inflation control. It may be that the thing to do is not to tinker with an elaborate machine of credit, interest rates, and monetary devices, but to take up the whole question of direct controls. (*The Reporter*, January 8, 1959, p. 20.)

It will be noted that Lloyd, like Galbraith, does not quite dare to come out in open advocacy of direct controls, in spite of the fact that the whole logic of his argument leaves him with no hope of an effective alternative policy. The reasons are doubtless partly political: men like Galbraith and Lloyd are looking forward to a political comeback in the near future, and they do not want to seem to get too far ahead of the main body of the Democratic Party which is still as much opposed to controls as the Eisenhower Republicans. But I wonder if there may not be another reason for this hesitant and lukewarm support of direct controls—perhaps something like an uneasy feeling that for a capitalist country to embark upon this path is to court new and unknown dangers?

Whether or not the liberal Democrats suspect something of this sort, I myself am convinced that it is true. To be sure, the United States, like other capitalist countries, operated a system of price-and-wage controls with reasonable success during World War II. But there could be no greater mistake than to assume that this proves that such a system would be similarly successful *permanently* and *in peacetime*. People will accept all

sorts of things in an emergency they know to be temporary which they would never willingly put up with in normal times and as a permanent arrangement. Moreover, wartime inflation really is the classical case of “too much money chasing too few goods,” while peacetime inflation, as we have seen, has entirely different causes. It is simply not permissible to apply lessons learned from wartime experience to the problems which we now face. The latter are *sui generis* and must be dealt with as such.

This is not the place to attempt a full-scale exploration of the implications of direct controls in a peacetime capitalist economy. I will only say that it seems to me highly probable (no one can or should attempt to speak with complete assurance on a matter of this sort) that sooner or later the problems created would be at least as serious as those intended to be solved. The one real strength of capitalism—the ground on which it must always rest its claim to the loyalty of *all* the people—is that it provides (in the market, combined with production for profit) an *impersonal* mechanism for deciding “who gets what, when and where.” Institution of permanent wage-and-price controls would mean scrapping this mechanism and making these decisions a direct function of political power. Whether this would be compatible, in the long run, with the continued existence of a private-enterprise system, readers must decide for themselves.

NOTES on a CHINA JOURNEY . . by Ella Winter

London
WE HAVE BEEN beaten over the head in our era, sometimes unexpected blows, and they have taught us caution.

ELLA WINTER, one of the few American writers to visit China in recent years, spent three months there last fall. A resident of London, Miss Winter is the author of *I Saw the Russian People* and other books.

So my baggage had plenty of grains of salt when I went to China. I would accept nothing at face value and I made a point of seeing those sides of life that could contain unflattering truth—a jail, a mental institution, divorce courts and slums. I interviewed ex-landlords, “capitalists” (their term for “businessmen”), rich peasants, cashiers. I asked exhaustive questions, double-checked and double-tested statements, statis-

tics, claims. They told me there was no stealing; I confronted them with photographs of a little Fagan gang stuck on a lamp post below my Hankow hotel. I was told working conditions were good; I showed them men embroiderers jammed together in a stone-floored room in Peking, where they also slept at night, earning about \$15 a month. I faced officials at the Ministry of Agriculture with the impossibility of growing

potatoes "in five layers" which I had been assured all over the country they were doing; and I queried the corn cobs "so big you could climb them" portrayed on wall fresco and workers' paintings, and "rice so thick you could sit on it as on a carpet."

I looked for discontent, suppression, regimentation; asked writers and artists about their lives (enough spoke my languages to dispense with interpreters); and I talked long to professors who might well be indignant at the "arrogant" attitude of pupils quite haughty about not being haughty any more. (Chinese intellectuals felt more superior about their eggheads than Americans do and seldom allowed physical toil to soil their hands.)

I checked with doctors, surgeons, nurses and social workers—American, British and French as well as Chinese—about claims made for medical progress, for abolition or near wiping-out of nutritional diseases, epidemics, syphilis, leprosy, and that particularly dread Chinese disease, schistosomiasis, which is carried by water snails in the rice paddies.

REPORTING China for the United States presents the particular difficulty that Americans have been kept in ignorance of developments for a decade. News that might have been taken in stride, with suitable caveats and descriptions of the feudal and pre-feudal society that was being superseded, may now hit too hard. You still see the old poverty, the scabrous alleys, clothing often ragged and few ties and collars. You see many goods—but on the level of Woolworth's, not Saks Fifth Avenue. There is no glue on stamps or envelope flaps, and no detergents and no bathmats (though plenty of towels embroidered with flowers and animals). Yet the cities and the factories and the news hum with cyclotrons and atomic reactors, Chinese-made, and I saw exhibits of farm machinery invented by peasants illiterate till yesterday that ploughed by electric cable, removed potato eyes, threshed grain and refined sugar. I saw it and did not believe it.

One must of course know what

China was like before: five hundred million peasants tied to landless poverty, working irregularly, often eating only roots; the country, every few years, subject to famine, flood and drought that carried away millions. Edgar Snow tells of the 40,000,000 dead in his first famine in 1928. One must know of the lack of hygiene, medicine, public health, the terrible diseases; infanticide, forced marriages, small girls sold into slavery. Tawney describes some of it in *Land and Labour in China* in 1936. The illiteracy (85 per cent), the taxation that landed peasants in jail or worse when they could not meet it, and the small number of wealthy landlords who held the position of feudal nobles with absolute power. Industry was infinitesimal—about 7,000,000 "capitalists" besides the "four families" who owned the billions with which they fled in 1949. Corruption and dishonesty were widespread. The poor submitted shufflingly to authority. In the centuries of Chinese history, this picture did not essentially change.

THAT China in the past decade has "leaped forward" few now doubt. What one sees side by side with the old slums are New Villages (many with individual houses), electric light, telephone, running water, radios. Sewers are taking the place of insanitary ditches that received filth and afterwards were drunk from. Children troop to hospitals for inoculations. Doubtless, the children are "indoctrinated" in kindergarten: they sing the song "Socialism is Good" the way the British sing "God Save Our Queen"; they also parrot "Under the leadership of Chairman Mao and the Communist Party of China" as my small son used to sing "Land where my fathers died." Women bear babies in maternity clinics instead of having the cord cut with rusty scissors or—as in a Yunnan minor nationality I visited—with a field knife because scissors were not permitted. Illiteracy is being wiped out by devices such as a word written on a blackboard in the paddy-field ("the word for today"); or by pinning sheets of pictures above the work-bench or in the clubroom; by distributing little

books for illiterates printed in millions; or in classes run by neighborhood committees, students, fellow-housewives or workers who have themselves just mastered the art of reading and writing.

Giant steam turbines, synthetic fibres, heat-resistant stainless steel, hydraulic forging presses, methane-generated electrical plants, pressurized electrostatic accelerators? They are being made.

ONE may suspect that such a pace of industrialization can be attained only by ants, slaves or forced labor and by the extinction of the human spirit. But what one sees in China are thousands of people digging, hauling, dragging, hacking—but also discussing, stopping every hour or two to determine the next assault on clay or stone or scaffolding. "Democratic discussion" is the order of the day and many an efficient "boss" tears his hair over it. The enthusiasm may be "manufactured," but that it exists there can be little doubt.

I talked to hundreds of people with large families still crowded into one or two rooms. Smiles met me, an eagerness to demonstrate the electric light, the two rooms and balcony, the tiny garden, the toilet (for fifty centuries, "night soil" was the chief Chinese fertilizer). It was I who was put out by the still-crowded roomlets, the brooms, mops, pails and clothes hung out to dry on the new balcony, the unsightly mess of shabby old suitcases that must still serve as furniture.

"I learned all I know from being beaten," a woman in a Peking textile mill said. "I worked in the Shanghai cotton plants since I was eight."

"My youngest is *three*," was the shining-faced response of a woman in a Hankow lane whom I asked about contraceptives available.

"I'm not going on with this," a pedicabber laughed. "It's not dignified; the government will help me to another job."

"We can go to the movies, walk in the park, see Peking opera twice a week," tobacco-factory workers in Shanghai said belligerently and determinedly. And a sad-faced water-

front docker remarked wonderingly, "I just married, at forty-five. I could never afford it before."

I walked over the first bridge to span the Yangtze River, which they built in two years. Through clean villages on tea collectives and rice communes, by cotton fields yielding those bumper harvests of 1958 whose figures people find incredible. How vital is it to count the exact ton or bushel or number, measure the size of the corn cobs, determine the

miles of irrigation, the cubic feet of dams and reservoirs? What one sees is the picture of a China building, producing, discovering, constructing and enthusiastically partaking in a communal life where women can leave drudgery behind and the peasant has a future. I saw the nights, throughout a nine-week trip, lit up by the little blast furnaces; I saw the millions of new saplings planted in city and countryside as windbreaks, for shade, against sand-

storms and for beauty. Why should people object or try to flee a country that is for the first time in their history giving them food, shelter, clothing, health and some leisure and entertainment?

What they say is, "Now we can stand up." You literally see confidence and self-respect replacing servility and self-depreciation. And when I asked over and over, "Are you better off?" they laughed in my face.

Let Educators Run Our Schools . . by Myron Lieberman

This is a companion piece to "Four Myths Cripple Our Schools," also by Mr. Lieberman, which appeared in last week's issue. In the judgment of The Nation's editors, these two articles constitute the most constructive analysis of our public-school system published in recent years. They have been adapted from the manuscript of a book now in preparation.

Mr. Lieberman teaches at the Graduate School of Education of Yeshiva University and is the author of Education as a Profession.

THE EDITORS

LOCAL CONTROL over curricula will be a major casualty of the growing national stake in the quality of public education. Within the foreseeable future, communities will no longer decide what subjects are to be taught in the public schools — nor will local PTAs, citizens' committees, veterans' organizations and other pressure groups which currently influence the school boards. Eventually, authority over the curriculum will be lodged with national professional agencies.

Of course, even today authority in this regard does not rest solely with local boards. In some states, certain subjects are required by state law; in others, a state government may make its financial support to school districts contingent upon compliance with state regulations concerning the curriculum. Furthermore, in approving curricula, local boards must respect the policies of accrediting agencies in order to ensure that students will be given credit when they

transfer to other schools or apply for admission to college. The colleges, through admission requirements, also exert heavy pressure on the public-school curriculum. Nevertheless, granting the existence of these and other pressures, it is the school board — composed of non-professionals — which ordinarily has the final word on curricula.

The folly of handing this authority to non-professionals is illustrated by the manner in which foreign languages are handled as a school subject. Many school systems offer no foreign language at all. This is not as foolish as offering it for only one or two years, as is common practice. There is no real point to the study of a foreign language unless the students acquire the power to use it — and this, with a normal curriculum, cannot be done in less than three or four years.

Offhand, one might suppose that local school boards customarily follow the recommendations of their professional staffs on all professional matters. This supposition is misleading even when true. The advice proffered by professionals is heavily influenced by their need to cater to the boards' prejudices. In many communities, the professional staff dares not recommend policies which are professionally sound simply because they are not politically expedient. This point is most clearly reflected in controversies over "subversive" instructional materials. It is or ought to be

obvious that instructional materials are neither subversive or non-subversive in isolation; the Constitution can be utilized for subversive purposes, just as the *Daily Worker* can be used to expose the nature of the Communist Party. However, very few public-school teachers or school administrators would dare to order the *Daily Worker* for classroom use. The teachers are not going to take any chances with a school board which, if it is typical, divides instructional materials into such ridiculous categories as "subversive" or "patriotic." And the board is not likely to "take any chances" on a headline in the local paper: "School Board Approves *Daily Worker* in the Schools."

Many prominent critics of public education believe that public-school personnel are responsible for introducing trivial subjects into the curriculum past the unsuspecting guard of school boards. No diagnosis could be more stupid. Subjects which have no real content or professional justification do not get included because school personnel ignores public opinion, but because it follows public opinion. The criticism that school administrators try to engineer public opinion to put over their own curriculum ideas is absurd; this is precisely what they ought to be doing, and are not.

The notion that public-school personnel should not make an important change in the curriculum without first securing community support has been propagated by schools of edu-

cation, and especially their departments of educational administration. This counsel is typically labeled a "democratic philosophy" of education. Advocated, as it usually is, without any conception of professional autonomy, its effect has been to make insistence upon such autonomy appear undemocratic to the teachers themselves. Indeed, it has tended to eliminate the concept of professional autonomy from the consciousness of teachers. In effect, the schools of education tell teachers they are "professionals" while simultaneously undermining the autonomy which is an essential ingredient of professional status.

Today, advocates of professional autonomy in education are often regarded as "authoritarians" or as persons who have lost faith in the democratic process. The reason is not difficult to understand. The operative cliché here is that the public should determine *what* should be taught, and the teachers should determine *how* to teach whatever it is that the public wants taught. Like most educational clichés, this one has just enough plausibility to hide its absurdity.

THE CRUX of the matter lies in the words "what" and "how." The public determines *what* should be taught in the sense that it sets the broad purposes of education. The fallacy lies in regarding the *what* as a list of subjects instead of a set of purposes. "Teachers should teach students to communicate effectively" is one thing; "teachers should teach penmanship one hour per day in the sixth grade" is something else again. The first statement is one of purpose which should be made by the public; the second is a statement of the means to be employed, and this should never be a matter of legislation or of decision by a non-professional agency. At any time, research may justify changes in the time devoted to a subject, or the grade levels at which it is taught. This is why it is foolish for a state legislature to prescribe the curriculum.

The other side of this coin is the confusion over the *how* in "how to teach." Once it is accepted that the public should determine *the broad*



Drawing by Mel Weinstein

purposes of education, then it becomes clear that "how to teach" refers to subjects as well as teaching methods. When we say that a doctor knows how to cure, we do not mean to limit the *how* to a bedside manner. We mean it to include the substantive knowledge which the doctor applies to achieve a desired end.

The public expects the medical profession to prolong life and to reduce physical pain. No one in his right mind assumes that the public should decide what drugs should be used and that doctors should decide only how to apply them. Absurd as this would be, it is exactly analogous to the notion that the public should determine the subjects to be taught and that teachers should decide only how to teach them. "How to teach" should be interpreted to mean, "How to achieve the goals set for the profession by the public." It would then be clear that non-professional determination of the curriculum is a threat to, not a safeguard of, our democratic institutions. And it would also be clear that the decline of local control of education means more than a simple transfer of authority from communities to the states or to the federal government. It can, and indeed it must, mean a tremendous increase in the power of the teachers as an organized group. This is the key to a number of problems which will arise during the transition to a centralized educational system.

It is difficult to predict the form which centralization will take. It may take place even while a great deal

of our present educational structure formally remains intact. To understand this, one must bear in mind that a *national* system of education is not necessarily the same thing as a *federal* system. Under a federal system, the schools are operated by the federal government. But education might continue to be the legal responsibility of state and local communities, yet become substantially similar all over the country as a result of non-governmental pressures. Under these circumstances, it would make sense to speak of an educational system that was national, but not federal.

The point can be illustrated by the situation in medicine. Legally, medical education and licensure are controlled by state medical boards. Actually, these state boards are so dominated by the American Medical Association that we have, in effect, a national system. A similar situation exists in other occupations which involve professional training and licensure.

In the next few decades, it is unlikely that we shall have a *federal* school system which covers the entire country. Such a development would occur only if the failure of states and communities to carry out their educational responsibilities were to be brought home dramatically to the American people by some such event as the abolition of public education in the Deep South. I am convinced, however, that we are about to move rapidly toward a *national* system. The idea that the present

chaos in education is the price one has to pay for living in a democracy, or the even more nonsensical notion that this chaos is actually a pillar of our democracy, will linger on, but without any real force in our society.

Unquestionably, the most important barrier to a centralized educational system is the notion that it would provide an opportunity for a pressure group, say a political party, to seize control of the schools, and by introducing its point of view, maintain itself in power. Those who think this way usually point to Soviet Russia to illustrate the dangers. But one cannot assume that a centralized educational system *per se* is more likely to be totalitarian than our own. England, France and the Scandinavian countries all have national systems of education. In all of these systems, there is less political interference with teachers than there is in the United States. Put positively, there is more freedom to teach and to learn in all of these national school systems than there is in the overwhelming majority of public schools in the United States.

HOW WOULD any particular group in this country — religious or economic — achieve such complete control of all schools as to produce a generation of unthinking disciples? To develop such a generation would require complete control of our mass media; this, in turn, would presuppose fairly complete control of the government. Any pressure group which could achieve such controls would have no need to control the schools. Indeed, it could safely permit schools to operate as they do now, preparing generations of civic illiterates who firmly believe they have fulfilled the highest obligations of citizenship when they have flipped a lever in a voting booth.

People are opposed to a centralized system of schools for many reasons, not all of them noble. Some of the opposition comes from private-school interests which would not share in the federal funds necessary to undergird such a system. In this connection, it requires little imagination to realize that the arguments which some private-school spokesmen make against federal aid to education, or

to a federal school system, are ludicrous. Private educational institutions, whose *raison d'être* is to keep the faithful from being exposed to heretical points of view, oppose federal aid on the grounds that it would mean mass conformity and indoctrination. But the free and independent mind which these institutions claim to nurture is what some of them fear above everything else.

Nonetheless, it must be conceded that many people have a gnawing fear of a centralized school system which is devoid of any selfish motivation. Their fear is for the integrity of the system, not for the fate of their particular views on political, economic, religious, racial or other controversial issues. Ironically, their doubts are often based upon experiences with local control; and every inanity committed by a local board reinforces, rather than weakens, their distrust of a federal system. For they argue that, under the present system, the worst blunders are confined to a limited area; what would happen, they ask, if a national school board or federal school administrator were to engage in the educational follies which characterize some local school boards?

The answer is that it would be a calamity—but that the more we centralize our school system (up to a point, of course), the less likely is it that such a calamity will occur. *The crucial point is that at the national level, no one group has the kind of power to interfere with the educational program that one sees every day under a system of local control.* The rabble rousers who can successfully frighten a large city school system like Los Angeles to drop an essay contest on the United Nations would find it much more difficult to undermine the curriculum in a federal school system. Even the more legitimate pressure groups, such as the AFL-CIO and the NAM, would be unable to shape the educational program in a federal system to their own ends. Each would be watched and checked by all the others if it attempted any massive interference. Thus, since no non-professional group would have the power to dictate, and since classrooms would not be subject to local censorship, teachers

would be free to discuss points of view which are now proscribed by local boards.

But the contention that no pressure group would be able to dominate a centralized educational system does not sound very persuasive. What assurance is there that the balance of power will not change suddenly so as to provide one of the groups, or a combination of them, with the opportunity it seeks to subvert the school program to its own ends?

If by "assurance" is meant an iron-clad guarantee, of course there is none. We are choosing between practical alternatives, not between mathematical solutions, one of which is the perfect answer. It is local control of education which provides the greater opportunity, on a *national* basis, for national pressure groups to dominate the educational programs of the public schools. *Local* school boards are unable to withstand the pressures which can be generated by powerful national organizations. On the other hand, in a centralized system, teachers' organizations would probably play a much more important role in protecting the integrity of public education than they do at the present time. To grasp the significance of this possibility, it is necessary to consider briefly some fundamental changes which have taken place in American society during the past 150 years.

WHEN our nation was founded, the American people were a much more homogeneous group, in terms of occupations, than they are today. In 1789, over 90 per cent of the people made their living directly or indirectly from farming. At that time, therefore, the problem of avoiding an excessive concentration of federal authority required a geographical, rather than an occupational, distribution of power. Today, the reverse is true. A cotton farmer in Mississippi has more interests in common with cotton farmers in neighboring states than he does with engineers, teachers or grocers in his own state. Thus he attempts to advance many of his major interests through his occupational group rather than through state or local communities.

I do not wish to oversimplify this situation, but there is no doubt that the distribution of power among occupational groups has tended more and more to overshadow its distribution among geographical groups.

As occupational specialization increases, so does our interdependence; and as interdependence increases, the regulation of occupational affairs becomes more and more a federal instead of a state function. And as this happens, it becomes apparent that powerful occupational organizations are necessary to prevent an excessive concentration of federal power. Example: As an increasing portion of industry and commerce becomes interstate rather than intrastate, there is more and more regulation of industry and commerce at the federal level; but standing in the way of arbitrary federal action is the emergence of occupational autonomy and strong national organizations of employers and employees.

These considerations are appropriate to education, and especially so because education is or should be a profession. A profession is an occupation which requires some kind of expertness. It is in the public interest to accord the professional worker the autonomy to make the decisions which call upon this expertness. This is why it is undesirable to have non-professional control over the curriculum in any school system.

IN ASSERTING the need for professional controls in a centralized system, I do not mean to contend that *all* professional decisions, such as those relating to curricula, should be made at the national level. Some should be made at state or local levels; others should be regarded as the prerogative of the individual teacher. This is also true of educational decisions of a non-professional nature: some should be made at the national level, others at state or local levels, and still others should be made by parents or students.

Regardless of whether a decision is professional or non-professional, the extent of state, local, and/or individual option to make it must be decided in the first instance at a more inclusive level. This is only common sense. For obvious reasons,

the American people as a whole have made national defense a federal concern. On the other hand, we provide individuals with many options concerning the ways in which they can fulfill their military obligations; they can, for instance, within the limits of national policy, choose their branch of service or enlist in the Regular Army. In education, there is an urgent need for a clear-cut, comprehensive national policy outlining the educational decisions to be made at the national, state, local and individual levels.

Our chief concern should be the way in which professional opinion is recognized and articulated in a centralized educational system. For example, the fact that some educational decisions may be made by federal officials is not important *per se*. What is important is who these officials are, how they are appointed, what specific decisions do they have the power to make, to what extent is their tenure dependent upon satisfying professional opinion, and so on. Those who attempt to settle concrete questions of power and authority in education by generalized appeals to the virtues of a particular level of control can be ignored with great profit.

At present, there is confusion in every direction. The line between professional and non-professional decisions has all but disappeared, with non-professional agencies making an enormous number of professional decisions. In addition, local school boards currently have the power to make all sorts of non-professional decisions which should be made at state or national levels.

IT MUST be clearly understood that both professionalization and centralization can be overdone. There is no calculus by which we can classify decisions; each must be evaluated on its own merits to determine whether it is professional in nature and at what level it should be made. We will never make educational sense until we stop using phrases like "local control of education" or "federal control of education" or "academic freedom" as substitutes for clear thinking about the decision-making structure of

education. For example, there has always been *some* federal control over public education; like any activity of state or local government, it must be carried on within the limitations set by the Constitution. All the furor over racial integration in public education should not blind us to the fact that the Supreme Court has long been deciding such issues as whether or not children in public schools must salute the flag in school, or be released for religious instruction. And although some critics may have questioned the wisdom of the Court's decisions, no one has seriously questioned its Constitutional right, its duty even, to make them.

BECAUSE, under our present system, people are accustomed to having pressure groups of every kind shaping the school program, they presuppose that the same policy would prevail under a centralized system. Obviously, if the educational program in a centralized system were to be placed under Congressional control, or under the control of a politically-dominated national school board, the ensuing political melee could be disastrous. But the way out is to realize that the problem is not which public—local, state or national—should shape the educational program, but how to make certain that the program is in the hands of the teachers, where it belongs. Once the American people understand the occupational dimension to the distribution of power in our educational system, they will have overcome the major psychological barrier to centralization.

It is not just a question of whether a more centralized system would be better *if* it were characterized by professional autonomy. The crux of the matter is that centralization itself will hasten the establishment of professional autonomy. It will dramatize the admittedly abysmal weaknesses of current teacher organizations and put in motion the forces eliminating the weaknesses. Centralization and professionalization are inevitable not in spite of what people think, but because enough people will eventually think long enough and hard enough about public education to realize that no other policy makes sense.

BOOKS and the ARTS

The Great Whatever

POPULAR RELIGION. Inspirational Books in America. By Louis Schneider and Sanford M. Dornbusch. The University of Chicago Press. 178 pp. \$4.50.

Gabriel Vahanian

"FAITH in fallacies is better than no faith at all," wrote Henry Link, apparently without fear or trembling, in a book published in 1936 whose title, ironically, was *The Return to Religion*. About twenty years and a world war later the same craving sustains the masses, persisting even through the ominous hostilities or conflicts of fallacious ideologies. Only, it has become somewhat more refined, and for this reason perhaps still more fallacious than Link's crude statement could ever be. Today people — and some of them noted men — are most amazingly prone to make hyperbolic professions of faith, though these often do not surpass the rather ostentatious and self-consoling level of (to use William Lee Miller's phrase) a "Passionate Faith in the Great Whatever." Or they may be swayed by the succinctness of Daniel Poling's deceptive declaration: "I believe — those two words with nothing added" (Why bother with instant coffee? Just swallow the coffee bean). Or they may attribute profound wisdom to or simply concur with these unfortunate words of President Eisenhower: "Our government makes no sense, unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith — and I don't care what it is." Both by tradition and by choice the Puritan tradition and, generally, the Judeo-Christian tradition, from which this nation's character stems, certainly would care what kind of faith it is and in what. So also would a humanist, a man of culture.

Schneider's and Dornbusch's excellent book, *Popular Religion*, lucidly creates in the reader an increasingly dismayed yet extremely compassionate understanding of the contemporary forms, whether authentic or fallacious, that the masses' religiosity exhibits. Impartially and critically, though with charity and theological ease, these two sociologists have analyzed forty-six best sellers in the field of inspirational literature, dating

from 1875 to 1955. The writings examined are, to cite just a few, by Hannah Smith, Trine, Conwell, Fosdick, E. Stanley Jones, Emmet Fox, Link, Trueblood, James Keller, Joshua Liebman, Thomas Merton, Peter Marshall, Fulton Sheen, and last but not least, Norman Vincent Peale. These writings were not selected simply because they were best sellers. They had to fulfill four other criteria. They must: 1) reflect, however broken, some aspect of the Judeo-Christian tradition; 2) present a view of salvation, be it in this world or the next, peace of mind or success being "adequate" substitutes; 3) offer techniques (*how to . . .*) for the achievement of the end just mentioned; 4) concern themselves with the everyday problems of everyday people (in contrast to the monastic manuals).

The starting point of this study is the fact that inspirational literature is part of the American mass culture. And from this angle, *Popular Religion* enlightens our understanding of both the religion and the culture of the masses. Concomitantly, it demonstrates that the masses do read a good deal, yet most of what they read reinforces their anti-intellectualism; and that they are religious, yet theirs is a more-and-more-of-less-and-less religion. Indeed, religion can be a self-devouring monster. And, faced by the many evidences of a definite upswing of religious feelings, especially in the recent decade, one wonders how to interpret such religious manifestations — whether as symbols of a deep and meaningful revival or as symptoms of inflation; e.g., "religion eases the pain of decision-making." "If only you will find out the thing God intends you to do, and will do it, you will find that all doors will open to you; all obstacles in your path will melt away; you will be acclaimed a brilliant success; you will be most liberally rewarded from the monetary point of view; and you will be gloriously happy" (Emmet Fox). "High octane thinking means Power and Performance" (Hannah Smith).

The first conclusion which *Popular Religion* draws, then, is that religion has been hollowed out and filled up with substitutes. The authors call this the secularization of religion, and their documentation leaves no doubt whatever about it. There is secularization, not so

much because the masses are today more interested in secular matters than they were in ages past, as because they no longer find the key to the meaning of their existence in a transcendent absolute but in those perplexing realities of this world which they wish to subjugate. In other words, the masses have given themselves to the cult of false absolutes. However, their attitude is not too different from that of old-type believers for whom the only thing worth living for was some after-life of bliss, and for whom this world was evil and, consequently, to be denied.

There are two ways of expressing contempt for the world and life here and now. The first consists in subordinating them to some other-worldly end — and according to Schneider and Dornbusch this is what Roman Catholic inspirational literature still proposes. The second is more subtle but results fundamentally in the same dualistic attitude of contempt for this world. It does this simply by investing the world it subconsciously despises with the very attributes of the absolute. By contrast, in the view of the older Calvinistic ethos the things of this world were truly regarded as ephemeral, yet, just as truly, their transitoriness did not prevent them from being apprehended as the "theatre of God's glory." Likewise, those who put their trust in God and construed this as the key to the meaning of existence both grew spiritually and — *adventitiously* — happened to prosper materially as well. Faith, however, was not gauged by the rewards of this life: these, in fact no less than poverty, were tested by faith. But today religion is good because it *works*, i.e., it produces material wealth or, a more fashionable substitute for wealth, mental if not physical health. "Today any successful and competent businessman will employ the lastest (*sic*) and best-tested methods in production, distribution, and administration, and many are discovering that one of the greatest of all efficiency methods is prayer power" (Peale). Why this transformation? Why this degradation?

IT IS beyond the authors' concern to grapple with this problem. They simply and cogently substantiate the fact that a degradation of religion has been taking place, and, as was stated above, they call it the secularization of religion.

This description, however, does not seem accurate from a strictly theological

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point of view. It may be that this is a matter of semantics. In the opinion of this reviewer at least, the secular is not the opposite of the spiritual but that *through* which the spiritual manifests itself. From this perspective the secular becomes very much a matter of concern for the spiritual. Thus the spiritual, by definition, is this-worldly — and that is how it should be. Thus also, when religion shifts its concerns from some mythological future life to this life, the turn need not be viewed as a loss, at least theologically speaking.

What, then, is the nature of the malaise with which *Popular Religion* confronts its reader? Simply this: from the standpoint of biblical religion, the antithesis to faith is not the secular but idolatry or, what amounts to the same thing, the idolatrous concern *about* the secular. Though faith in God is all-encompassing and therefore concerns itself with all aspects of human existence, it can also show *lack* of faith in the way it voices its concern. In the end it tends to substitute this concern for God Himself, and thus idolatrizes it. That is why, in this reviewer's opinion, what we are witnessing today, rather than a secularization, is the *idolization* of religion.

IN FACT, the authors corroborate this judgment in a footnote:

It is an intriguing speculation that, when faith lapses, the things it may ordinarily achieve for us without any particular thought or effort on our part become objects of technologically oriented behavior. The speculation is of interest both within and outside of religion. It has been suggested that preoccupation with the technology of sexual intercourse is likely to occur when love has become a problematic and dubious matter, as well as that technologies of child-rearing appear when "natural" love for children is no longer an early and spontaneous thing. Similar considerations may apply in the field of religion. If this kind of speculation has any merit, then the very emergence of a technological orientation in certain fields of human concern may be interpreted as in some sense a sign of degeneration.

That the literature examined provides evidence of this kind of "technological orientation" is beyond dispute. Almost without exception, the inspirational book contains a number of suggestions for all kinds of do-it-yourself divine providence and predestination and salvation.

Other conclusions drawn by Schneider and Dornbusch cumulate to reinforce the foregoing argument. Thus, for ex-

ample, the authors note the "mental science" strain characteristic of much of the recent religiosity (i.e., peace of mind and health rather than wealth as goal of the religious life). Also the popular religiosity more and more stresses a certain consanguinity between reason and religion — we live in the space age, don't we? — but so awkwardly that religion seems to have run out of reasons for believing in God. Small wonder, then, that it should idolatrize peace of mind and all sorts of similar substitutes. And the fact that it does this by appealing to psychology or psychotherapy or technology or science by no means minimizes its adulteration, because this appeal itself "can be looked

upon as a sign of lapse of faith." As Jeremiah put it: "In vain you have used many medicines; there is no healing for you."

Of course, popular religiosity is and will always be a maze. It is just amorphous enough to prevent anyone from sitting in self-righteous judgment upon it. And yet, as Schneider and Dornbusch suggest by way of a conclusion: "Perhaps above all else, the literature gives a powerful impression that the search for the philosopher's stone has not ended; it has only taken on new form and is carried on under new circumstances. The market for magic still appears to be very much alive, as it presumably was in far antiquity."

Humor in a Tough Age

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MARK TWAIN. Arranged and edited by Charles Neider. Harper & Brothers. 388 pp. \$6.

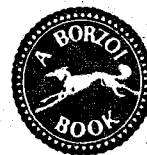
Kenneth Rexroth

WAS Mark Twain a schizophrenic? Van Wyck Brooks established his own critical reputation with a book proving that he was. T. S. Eliot, who has provided two generations of professors with their slim stock of ideas, said he was. It has often been remarked that he was a *laveur*, at least as far as clothes were concerned. Dressing only in white suits laundered every day, he must have been awful guilty of something awful. From the point of view of a small office in a provincial English Department, with rows of Henry James and Soren Kierkegaard on the shelves and hapless coeds slipping exercises in Creative Writing under the door—from this elevated point of view, Mark Twain certainly looks very *queer*.

I think this is all balderdash. Too few critics of his own kind have written about Mark Twain. What he suffers from in the midst of this twentieth and American century is a lack of peers. He needs somebody like Walter Bagehot or even H. L. Mencken or James Gibbons Huneker. He was a man of the world. He was a man of the nineteenth-century American world where presidents chewed tobacco and billionaires couldn't spell and vast audiences flocked to hear Bob Ingersoll (whom Twain in this book calls "the silver tongued infidel") and

KENNETH REXROTH is at present living and working at Aix en Provence. A collection of his essays, Bird in the Bush, will be published this spring.

the labor movement was dominated by another silver tongued cornball named Terence Powderly, who could do nothing but orate, and "Thanatopsis" was considered the most philosophical utterance in the English language, and a small gang of merciless and ignorant brigands



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ALFRED A. KNOPF, Publisher

March 7, 1959

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put through America's Five Year Plans, and finally "overtook and surpassed" Europe. He was a man of that world that Henry James fled in uncomprehending horror. We have only to look abroad to understand exactly the kind of world it was. It was a world of driving expansion and brutal hard work that brooked no interference or dissent. A world of "primitive accumulation."

IT WAS the official culture which was schizophrenic, not Mark Twain. The whole meaning of Mark Twain is that he "saw life steadily and saw it whole." T. S. Eliot thought his billiard room jokes childish. They are pretty bad, but are they as bad a joke as Eliot's essay on Crashaw? Mark Twain's low humor was a technique of adjustment to the broadest possible areas of society. It made him a public figure, it gave him the confidence of presidents of the United States and of the principal corporations of the United States. And it gave him entrance to the American Home, back in the days before Mom had emasculated that institution. All sorts of people, practically everybody, thought he was very, very funny. T. S. Eliot's essay on Crashaw is a snickering little joke on a very small clique of people who were viable themselves only within a scarcely less minute clique—the few High Church members of the now long dead Bloomsbury circle. Furthermore, it owes its character as humor entirely to its incongruous treatment of the standard undergraduate course in Jacobean and Caroline literature—in other words it is *College Humor* in spats and bowler. In his autobiography, Mark Twain tells the story of his absurd brother Orion, who used to cool his brain by kneeling in the full bathtub and immersing his head for two minutes at a time. Once the chambermaid opened the unlocked door and ran screaming, "Mr. Orion is drowned!" and his wife said, "How did you know it was Mr. Orion?" Who is childish, Mr. Eliot or Mark Twain?

Like Jack London, Mark Twain says he went into writing because it was the easiest work he could find, so easy that at the end of his life he could say he hadn't worked a lick in fifty years—it had all been play. This is the remark of a man thoroughly at home in literature. Anything less like Henry James's ridiculous prefaces would be hard to imagine. Writers like Mallarmé and James and Flaubert, who are always squawking about how artistic they are and how much it hurts, really accept the judgment of bourgeois society that they are loafers. They are ashamed of

being writers and endlessly try to justify themselves. The amateur psychoanalysts of Mark Twain are the guilty ones, straddling their double standards. They can't understand this man who was hail fellow well met with cowboys and duchesses, who told the Kaiser that his cook baked potatoes just like a pocket miner he'd known during the Gold Rush. Since they are terrified even at a cocktail party given by another Literary Personage and have no social presence whatsoever and go into rages when their very freshmen can't see the relevance of the *Summa Theologica* to *Deerslayer*, they think Mark Twain must be a fraud and crazy to boot.

Mark Twain was just a very wise nineteenth-century man. He knew his way around socially in the age of the Robber Barons. He knew how to keep his head above water in the Period of Primitive Accumulation. Corny humor, broad anecdotes, after-dinner oratory, primitive vaudeville roles—the Missouri hayseed abroad, a Connecticut Yankee at King Arthur's Court—these may be protective coloration, but they are not selling out. If it weren't Mark Twain but somebody several centuries previous—or Charlie Chaplin—the highbrows would call it the adaptation of folk forms to serious literature. Because those guffawing, tobacco-spitting travel books that made Mark Twain's reputation in the first place and that gave Van Wyck Brooks fainting spells are fundamentally right. Always Mark Twain points out the human meaning of St. Peter's or the pyramids or the Pantheon. What was the social price

paid for the Sistine Chapel when it was painted? What is the social price being paid today? It is true that he sweetened the pills, but the word for this is "mastering the terms of the folk culture." Who objects to it in Charlie Chaplin or Little Abner, or, for that matter, Count Basie? That he had to do this is shown by Charles Neider's preface to this very book. At the most, Mark Twain was a mild agnostic, usually he seems to have been an amused Deist. Yet, at this late date his own daughter has refused to allow his comments on religion to be published.

What is there to say about this book? It is a more coherent collection of Mark Twain's random reminiscences than the Paine or De Voto volumes, but it omits some of the political and social criticism that De Voto printed and that is certainly important to an understanding of Mark Twain. It is, of course, a book of Mark Twain in his bedroom slippers. Everybody who has read much of Mark Twain is familiar with this aspect of him because he went around that way most of the time. He was never ashamed to be seen in the maximum state of personal dishevelment. Only people who find it impossible to deal with other human beings unless they have on their social masks find this embarrassing. It is very corny, very male, very smoking car and billiard room. But it is all very normal too. Mark Twain remembered his childhood, and loved his wife and daughters and mourned their deaths just as your own relatives back home in Elkhart, Indiana did those things in 1906. He didn't do any of those things

Departure

The figs on the fig tree in the yard are green,
Green also, the grapes on the green vine
Shading the brickred porch tiles.
The money's run out.

How nature, sensing this, compounds her bitters.
Ungifted, ungrieved, our leavetaking.
The sun shines on unripe corn.
Cats play in the stalks.

Retrospect shall not soften such penury—
Sun's brass, the moon's steely patinas,
The leaden slag of the world—
But always expose

The scraggy rock spit shielding the town's blue bay
Against which the brunt of outer sea
Beats, is brutal endlessly.
Gull-fouled, a stone hut

Bares its low lintel to corroding weathers:
Across that jut of ochreous rock
Goats shamle, morose, rank-haired,
To lick the sea-salt.

SYLVIA PLATH

the way the folks do that you meet drinking Pernods in the Deux Magots. Those people in the Deux Magots find him very square—"straight" is the term in the *milieu*. They think he didn't really mean it, that something was going on behind the scenes. He meant it. This is not Mark Twain's public mask. It is him. He didn't have a public mask. Like all adults, his contradictions and contraries were simply part of him, like his right and left hand.

If Baudelaire was the greatest poet

of the capitalist epoch—and he *was* a mild schizophrenic, a sexual freak and a syphilitic—Mark Twain wrote its saga, its prose *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. And he wrote it because he knew how to survive to write it. He survived because he was an eminently normal man. No wonder it is the favorite prose fiction of the Russians. It is the archetypal epic of precisely the historical period they are now in themselves. Unfortunately, so far, nobody has known how to survive to write that epic in Russian.

ters! He urges that the agencies rely less on "gentlemen's agreements" and more on conclusive prosecutions. And he suggests that means be found to give mass publicity to the results of enforcement activities.

He urges, finally, greater consumer interest, both individual and group. Mr. Cook has some complimentary things to say about the work of the A.M.A. Bureau of Investigation, the Better Business Bureaus, Consumers' Union and Consumers' Research. But his call to the drug manufacturers to clean house, to publishers to examine their consciences, and to manufacturers, physicians and pharmacists to restrain the constant upsurge of medical costs is, unfortunately, wishful polemic.

The inclusion of some clinical horrors would have strengthened the argument. The author's passing references to bromide poisoning, child mortality from aspirin, the effects of phenylpropanolamine (appetite repressant), and one or two such others, are not sufficient to point up the fact that the problem is not basically one of economics, or business morality, or law, but essentially a problem in public health and welfare.

In addition, I believe that Mr. Cook

The Hypochondriac Bonanza

REMEDIES AND RACKETS. By James Cook. W. W. Norton and Co. 252 pp. \$3.75.

David L. Cowen

THE RECENT death of Samuel Hopkins Adams has called to mind the tremendous public service which *Collier's* performed, fifty years ago, in publishing his series on "The Great American Fraud." It also points up the deplorable fact that there is today probably no mass-circulation publication with both the courage and the freedom to run James Cook's *Remedies and Rackets*.

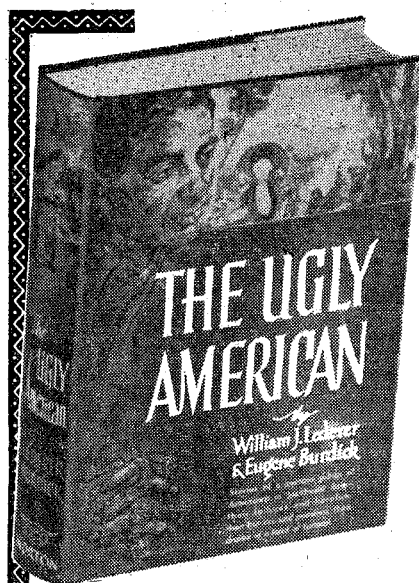
The book "grew" out of the series originally written for the New York *Post* by Mr. Cook and Peter J. McElroy. It is, however, more than an exposé of what is still called the "patent" medicine industry (what we buy are "proprietary" not "patent" medicines); it is a telling commentary on American life. The tremendous power of the advertising world, the national propensity for self-medication, the gullibility of the American public (the straightforward cautionary statement on the Bromo Seltzer label, for example, should scare the daylights out of any reasonably intelligent person), the tenacity of an economico-legal system that gives the breaks to the "patent" medicine maker, all reflect a kind of immaturity that is, literally, deadly serious.

Mr. Cook details the frauds, the exaggerations, the shenanigans of the "patent" medicine industry. He describes the tireless and futile efforts by private groups or government agencies to police these activities. He builds an overwhelming case for his recommendations.

The first of these is the need for changing existing law: the present di-

vision of responsibilities among three enforcement agencies (Federal Drug Administration, Federal Trade Commission, Post Office Department) needs coordination and strengthening. Regulations and penalties need to be stiffened and applied to deceptive advertising as well as to deceptive labeling.

Mr. Cook asks, secondly, for more funds and personnel; he points out that the FTC and the post office have between them but nine enforcement officers working full time on drug mat-



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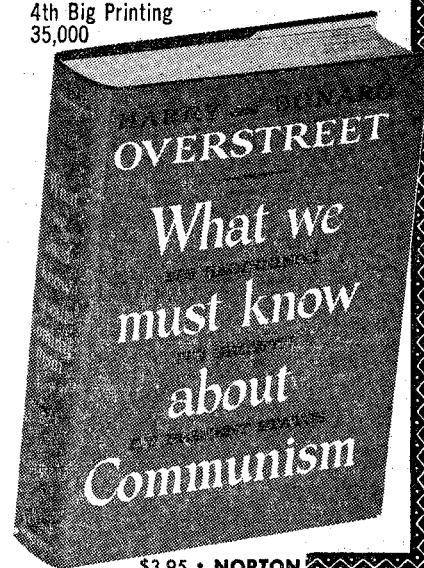
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DAVID L. COWEN, who teaches history at Rutgers University, has long interested himself in the special history of pharmacy.

March 7, 1959

has treated the Proprietary Association too gingerly. This unincorporated association, founded in 1881, described itself in 1952 as having "approximately 150 members who produce ninety per cent of the proprietary medicines sold in the United States." Its long role as a lobby is known well enough, but there is more to the association than meets the eye. It offers "associate memberships," which are open to advertising agencies and advertising media. (Judging from a list of a few years ago (the publications of the association are not readily available to the public), the most important magazine publishers, the broadcasting chains and one major New York newspaper are such associate members. A good number of advertising agencies, including three of the very largest, are also asso-

ciate members. The social impact of this concentration of power and community of interests is obvious enough.

Finally, I feel that Mr. Cook has not taken a sufficiently firm stand on the movement afoot to place proprietary medicines on grocery shelves, and thus break down the "restrictive sales" policy by which medicines, including proprietaries, can legally be sold only by, or under the supervision of, a registered pharmacist. The prospect of greater freedom in the marketing of proprietaries, backed by the tremendous resources of Madison Avenue, is frightening. Indeed, not merely the public health, but the whole fiber of a people able to dose themselves at will with such a frenetic variety of drugs, is the issue at stake.

tions, small classes, general education, restricted college enrollments, long presidential tenures, professors as administrators, and the "publish or perish" theory. On the credit side, he thinks that the high schools are better than they were thirty years ago. He debunks the professors who deplore the lack of pre-college preparation, and correctly declares that all the non-scientist college entrant needs is the ability to read and write competent English.

Williams asks that the universities cure themselves by rigorous self-criticism and emphasis on better teaching. He requests that the university try to inspire four ideals in its students: the democratic, the scientific, the Christian, and the joy of learning. The presentation of these ideals is certainly neglected and needed in American colleges. Williams may often stroke with too broad a brush and with too vivid color; but any perceptive student can tell you that his criticisms are legitimate and vital.

A Candid Look at the Faculty

SOME OF MY BEST FRIENDS ARE PROFESSORS: A Critical Commentary on Higher Education. By George Williams. Abelard-Schuman. 250 pp. \$3.95.

Bryce E. Nelson

SINCE the Russians sallied past the stratosphere, and the American education lobbies learned that they could equate their own legitimate interests with the national defense, Americans have eyed the plight of the secondary schools. James Bryant Conant has completed his study. Parents berate their school boards for inadequately preparing their children for college.

Professor Williams twists the knife a little deeper. He warns parents that American colleges are educationally inadequate for their children. The essence of his argument: "Students in our universities are not learning as they should and the teacher is at fault."

Professor Williams is right. Even at the best colleges, learning evokes little student excitement; few undergraduates understand the ideological foundations of Western Civilization; few find purpose or direction. Williams maintains that American colleges have not changed their attitudes or methods in at least the last forty years, even though the world has experienced drastic changes. He justifiably asks: "If Nero became infamous for fiddling while Rome burned, what will be the future reputation of the modern college professor?"

BRYCE E. NELSON has been president of The Harvard Crimson. Next year he will be a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford.

Williams can be easily criticized: his writing is sensational; he is too general; he has done relatively little research; he yields to the human desire to find a tangible villain, and discovers it always in the college teacher. Still, Williams is basically right. American colleges are selling their students short.

However, the indictment is not a blanket one: "This does not mean that the universities are complete failures; it means merely that they are far more unsuccessful, according to their own standards, than they are generally willing to admit." In large part, Williams attributes the failure of self-analysis to the limitations of the professorial personality.

THE SECTION of the book devoted to dissection of this personality will particularly offend academic readers. The professor finds himself described as "a moderate conservative in politics, clothes, and morals . . . satisfied with the world as well as himself . . . [displaying] a deep sense of inferiority, fear, and maladjustment overlain by an almost fantastic sense of superiority . . . 'a harmless drudge.'" Williams rightly says that he might have called his book: "Some of My Best Friends Were Professors."

But Williams has complaints other than those arising from the academic personality. He has little use for the grading system, and especially for the university's tendency to equate academic standards with the number of low grades given — "the domineering element in the student's relation to his education is — the grade." He expresses his skepticism of: admissions examina-

Lizzie Harris

First a rabbit died,
and then a crow.

The children knew they had
to go the measured way
of funeral.

But Whimpy
got the rabbit first;
without the creaky comfort
of a hearse he popt it
into kingdom come.

And so the crow was left
to ask the best of rites.

Accustomed to the weed-
choked little graveyard
just behind his house,
the biggest boy picked out
what seemed least occupied
the longest time, a plot
most fitting for a crow.

The name upon its pocky
stone was "Lizzie Harris."

Then banging on a pot
to beat the band, he led
the four-man funeral
to cries of "Good-bye,
Lizzie Harris, good-bye!"
as the youngest, dragging
Lizzie by the neck, brought
up the rear.

But Whimpy,
having sped one parted
guest, stayed home, intent
upon the welcome-mat,
to pay his full respects.

So she was laid to rest
in such choice feather-bed.

T. WEISS

THEATRE

Harold Clurman

LES BALLETES AFRICAINS (Lunt-Fontanne) are interesting, stimulating and fun. The over-all quality, surprisingly enough, is a certain sweetness. "Surprising" because from the constant beat of drums which punctuates the evening—now harsh and dry, now frantically exciting—one supposes that the final effect will be either one of "primitive" violence or of ominous mystery. Instead one is captured by a sense of intimacy with nature, a healthy feeling of life accepted with an innocent openness of spirit.

Reita Fodeba, organizer and director of these ballets—chiefly French African in origin—points out that the dances are wholly authentic, even though they are not of purely aboriginal or ancient tradition, because contemporary Africa has been influenced by contact with varying civilizations and cultures. So if we hear sounds that recall flamenco or Calypso song, if we observe a flash of jitterbug cavorting or if occasionally there are Parisian notes in the show, these "Ballets" are nonetheless indigenous to a considerable portion of the Dark Continent today.

The performance is richly captivating. There is a number in which a peasant at harvest time is bitten by a snake as he works in the field. The witch doctor tries to heal the stricken man but fails; the other peasants sing to soothe him in his death throes. This is impressive drama: gentle and touching. Work, anguish, compassion are depicted with unemphatic simplicity. Episodes based on legend and superstition reflect the inscrutable terror of earth forces with such naive directness that one asks oneself how one could ever think of these phenomena in any other way.

There are exuberant and playful bits that show the citified traits which have been grafted on the primeval roots with quaintly charming results. Oddly handsome instruments with subtly whispering timbres suggest sentiments too delicate for the boldness of speech and soften the effect of love songs shouted in tones of metallic resonance. Girls who should be naked have either taken on a strange elegance in copious finery or struggle in adolescent embarrassment at the predicament of their dress. There are flirtations without sensuality in which sex play is adumbrated with the natural freedom of eddying waters. The only obscenity I should complain of is the brassieres the New York license commis-

sioner has imposed on the women; in every other city they were bare-bosomed.

A word must be said about the settings—graphically modern and wholly right in the use of raw materials consonant with the climate and general environment of the places represented—settings which our designers should study to divest themselves of the stuffy Radio City decorativeness they so frequently employ to convey an exotic atmosphere.

A MAJORITY OF ONE by Leonard Spigalgass (Shubert) is not a play about which one can be critical. It stands in a category *beside* criticism, the kind of play which in one form or another has always been with us. It is a staple of metropolitan theatrics on its most popular level, and it would be silly to answer the question, "What do you think of it?" One needn't, one doesn't, one shouldn't think of it. Its movement on the stage marks a tickling passage of time. Such plays have always been smash hits.

A Majority of One is much more sophisticated than *Abie's Irish Rose*, but bears a distinct relationship to the basic pattern of that classic. There is a "switch": in the new play a nice Jewish widow from Brooklyn considers marriage to a Japanese widower and millionaire, despite the almost bigoted shock of the lady's "progressive" daughter and her son-in-law, an economic advisor of our State Department on assignment to Japan. The play's motto might be hands-across-the-sea: no prejudice against citizens of former enemy nations—regardless of their race or religion.

The Jewish lady compares every Japanese dish to one familiar in Brooklyn; the Japanese gentleman likens gefulte fish to something in his Oriental diet. So we get a good-humored melting pot liberalism on a base of American Jewish jokes. Several of these are really funny. (Everything Jewish isn't funny!) The Japanese gentleman, when asked whether his daughter-in-law might object to his marrying a Jewish woman, answers "My daughter-in-law is not acquainted with the theological distinctions of the Caucasian world; her only objection might be that you are white." I thought that rather neat.

The most affectingly "Japanese" element of the show is the subdued wail hidden in Gertrude Berg's voice like a secret and enduring lament. Mrs. Berg is a good sensible woman of marked dignity. Her relaxation on the stage is complete. These qualities, in addition to her modest humor, are, despite a slight monotony, irresistible. Cedric Hardwicke supports her proficiently.

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MUSIC

Lester Trimble

ROGER SESSIONS' *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra*, which was given its New York premiere recently by violinist Tossy Spivakovsky and the New York Philharmonic, proved to be one of the most distinguished (and demanding) works to appear thus far on Leonard Bernstein's season-long panorama of American music. Like many fine, serious works, it has made its way slowly. Twenty-four years passed between its completion and its first appearance at Carnegie Hall; in the interim, it has had only scattered performances. And it is interesting to note that, even in

the case of an elder American composer, long and firmly established as one of his country's leading creative minds, no publisher would print the work and promote it into the repertory until Spivakovsky and Bernstein went ahead and gave it a big boost themselves. Moreover, the edition which has been put out, though clear, will never win a beauty contest. There is something disgraceful about the disinclination of American music publishers to nurture the very art from which they skim their livings.

The Sessions concerto is a long work, laid out in four movements, each of which hovers rather relentlessly around a single basic mood. In the opening *Largo tranquillo*, the orchestra flows along in even note values a good deal of the time, while the solo violin sings intricately above it. In the second movement, the mood changes to one of a *Scherzo*; in the third, a *Romanza*. The fourth is a sort of *tarantella*. While it is not literally true that the soloist plays every single moment, that is the impression one gains from an initial hearing. For the soloist does, in fact, play so much of the time, and his part is so highly evolved in an intellectual sense, that the listener's attention must be constantly, fully and intelligently engaged. That is not, in my opinion, an exorbitant demand. But it does mean that each minute shape in the solo line must be examined and related to its context. Following only general directional flows, broad melodic contours, or rhythmic expostulations will not suffice.

IN THE orchestra, too, materials are worked out in intricate detail, and I suspect that Sessions' unusual manner of orchestrating the concerto has made this harder to follow than it needs to be. For there are no violins at all in the accompanying orchestra. Only the low, comparatively dull-sounding string choirs are employed—violas, cellos and basses. The woodwinds and brass choirs, on the other hand, remain at normal, full-orchestra strength. To my ears, this creates a disbalance in the ensemble and robs the concerto of a surface brilliance which it might easily possess without giving up any of its present sturdy virtues. Lacking violins, the sound of the orchestra becomes veiled, over-consistent and dark. The woodwinds, when they flow along on the interior, seem smothered inside a kind of soft, opaque

blanket. They are always doing interesting things, and important as well. But it is often hard to know precisely what these things are.

I will not attempt to guess why Sessions omitted the violins, but in a lot of such cases a notion is at work — one which says that thirty-two violins will certainly drown out or absorb the sound of a single one, and that if the bunch of them are just left out, the soloist can spin a more clearly audible line in the open air. To an extent, and with very involved qualifications, that is true. But the sounds produced by a solo violin and those produced by a section of violins differ more in quality than in quantity. A solo violinist can cut through an amazing amount of massed string sound. And, where he cannot, the orchestrator can help him out by a thousand devices less drastic than lopping off the torso of the orchestra. Such major surgery not only deprives the entire ensemble of a potential for clear-speaking; the soloist also loses much of the very kind of acoustical enhancement which is needed to make his part shine brightly.

In my opinion, the Sessions *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* is one of the major contemporary essays in its medium. Without trying to place it on an exact rung of the ladder, I can say that it very clearly belongs in company with the Berg *Violin Concerto*; and that is a great deal to say. At the same time, I do not think it is possible to hear the work completely as it stands. One can strain to hear it; indeed, one can fairly well understand it. But not without extreme and unnecessary difficulty. The concerto is an intelligent work. But it is not intrinsically abstruse, and there is no reason for it to seem so. I am sure the composer could re-examine it in the light of the years of experience he has gained since its composition, and give its orchestral language the quality of sharpness already possessed by the solo line. It is a pity, after all, to speak less than clearly when one has something important to say.

Messrs. Spivakovsky and Bernstein deserve the highest praise both for their enlightened judgment in programming the concerto, and for the splendidly alert manner in which they played it. It is a tremendously difficult piece, requiring a virtuoso with musical brains as well as dash, and a conductor who can penetrate the internal complexities of the accompanying part without losing touch with his collaborative and supporting functions. I can think of no two musicians who could have done the job in a more exemplary fashion.

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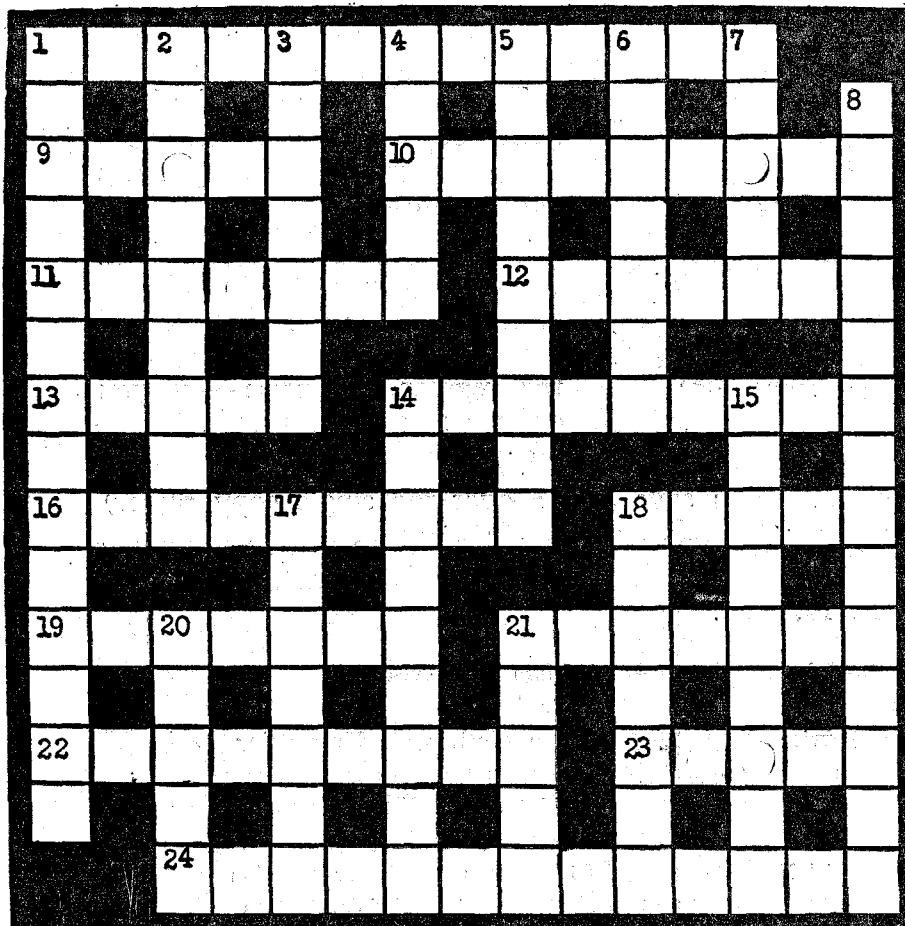
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Crossword Puzzle No. 810

By FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS:

- 1 and 20 down Does it involve opinion by only a few million Frenchmen of a picture? (3, 8, 2, 5)
- 9 Exposure to the risk of being hurt by the French? (5)
- 10 Calls it in a little? (9)
- 11 Implying a choice with a conservative manner of speaking? (7)
- 12 A general in retreat carries a sullen expression; perhaps one gets hooked. (7)
- 13 A song has more than one connection with this joint. (5)
- 14 A crying need is satisfied by such effusion. (9)
- 16 Behaves somewhat subdued in part. (9)
- 18 Its cast was not appreciated by Philistines. (5)
- 19 Kids Britain of its early occupants of shows? (7)
- 21 Its card implies severe complications. (7)
- 22 Getting closer together in the rain? Wrong! (9)
- 23 Does it sound like the cabinet of a Philadelphia lawyer? (5)
- 24 At the same time, it makes N.Y.'s only chorus. (13)

DOWN:

- 1 Double-A topic? Of course, of course! (7, 7)

- 2 Is the price of corn set aside? (9)
- 3 At least one soul is set free! (7)
- 4 Well, it might be — with a display of sentiment. (5)
- 5 Attests, with or without the center of French. (9)
- 6 Nominal. (7)
- 7 Sheet of oil, perhaps. (5)
- 8 Somewhat redundantly, a car has a reasonable system in check. (15)
- 14 Wigmaker, as a source of amusement to Eros? (9)
- 15 Believes the sea has a rough satin finish? (9)
- 17 It takes a nurse to inject a cocoa mixture in her skin! (7)
- 18 A poor imitation of Winnie, by the sound of it, might get in your hair. (7)
- 20 See 1 across
- 21 Rover, for example, to leave in hiding. (5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 809

ACROSS: 1 Buckwheat; 6 Horsa; 9 Nadir; 10 Bombastic; 11 Overshoes; 12 Troll; 13 Aries; 15 Dumbfound; 18 Angle iron; 19 Lodes; 20 Gamut; 22 Chambered; 25 Spaghetti; 26 Roost; 27 Crimp; 28 Paymaster. DOWN: 1 Banjo; 2 Cudgeling; 3 Warms; 4 Embroider; 5 Tombs; 6 Healthful; 7 Ratio; 8 Accolades; 13 Analgesic; 14 Sweatshop; 16 Mendacity; 17 Underfoot; 21 Miami; 22 Cut up; 23 Berra; 24 Deter.

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